



U.S. Department of Justice

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Monday, June 6, 2011

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<http://www.justice.gov/usao/dc/news/2011/apr/news.html>

## **District Man Convicted of 26 Counts, Including Obstruction of Justice and Threats, In Events Surrounding 2008 Killing - Defendant Faces a Retrial on Murder Charges -**

WASHINGTON - Roderick A. Ridley, 34, of Washington, D.C., has been convicted of 26 felony counts stemming from events surrounding the 2008 murder of a woman inside an apartment building in Southeast Washington, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

Ridley was convicted on June 3, 2011, in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, of one count each of first degree burglary and carrying a dangerous weapon, eight counts of obstruction of justice, six counts of contempt, and 10 counts of felony threats. However, after six days of deliberations, the jury was unable to reach a verdict on felony murder, premeditated murder and another count of threats stemming from the killing of 33-year-old Tiffany Gates.

Ridley faces a retrial on those charges. The Honorable Gerald I. Fisher, who presided at trial, scheduled sentencing for the 26 counts on July 28, 2011. Ridley faces the possibility of life imprisonment for those charges.

This brutal domestic violence case began in August of 2008, when the defendant was arrested for arson of Tiffany Gates's apartment, located in the 3900 block of D Street SE. Gates was the defendant's former girlfriend. Ridley was held without bond and was ordered by four judges to have no contact with Gates. Despite the Court's orders, Ridley called Gates more than 400 times, threatened to kill her, and demanded that she not cooperate with the prosecution in the arson case. Ridley made numerous phone calls in which he stated that he hated Gates, and that he would get out of jail and kill her. Eventually, though, he persuaded her to agree that he should be released to a halfway house. Then, on October 28, 2008, he escaped from a halfway house.

On November 21, 2008, Gates called the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) and a member of the U.S. Marshals Service to notify them that Ridley was outside her apartment. Although police were on the scene, they were unable to gain entry into the apartment building.

According to the government's evidence, Ridley had gained entry into Gates's apartment building and kicked in her apartment door. He used a knife to brutally stab her. A neighbor heard a loud noise, heard Gates scream, and then saw the defendant flee the apartment. Moments later, Gates knocked on the neighbor's door and collapsed. Seconds later, police gained access to the inside of the building.

Within an hour, Ridley was found hiding in a vacant apartment in the basement underneath a kitchen sink. Gates's blood was found on Ridley's sweatshirt, pants, and shoes. Ridley resisted arrest and it took four law enforcement officers to physically carry him from the building.

The jury convicted Ridley of first degree burglary for breaking in Gates's door on the night of the killing with intent to commit an assault, and of carrying a dangerous weapon - the knife. However, the jurors were unable to reach a conclusion as to the murder charges.

In announcing the verdict, U.S. Attorney Machen praised the work of D.C. Arson Investigator James Taylor; U.S. Marshal Inspector Robert Hoffmaster, and Tommy Miller, Durand Odom and John Marsh, investigators for the U.S. Attorney's Office. He also praised those who worked on the case from the MPD, including Officers Thomas O'Donnell, Vincent Manning, David Jarbo, and Patrick Hogan; Forensic Lab Specialists Jennifer Zeffer, Lesley Kline, and Lisa Brewer; Mobile Crime Technicians Agee Kemper, Ridley Durham, Michael DePrince, Stanley Rembish, Tony G. Nwami, Perthoria McIver, and Valerie Campbell; Detectives Manuel Gaffney, Gail Russell-Brown, and Earl DeLauder, and Sergeants Daniel Wagner and Dean Combee. He also acknowledged the work of Metro Transit Police Detective Chris Archer and the FBI specialist who assisted with the case.

U.S. Attorney Machen also acknowledged the assistance of Litigation Technology Specialists Leif Hickling, Paul Howell, William Henderson, and Ron Royal; Paralegal Specialists Wanda Queen, Phaylyn Hunt, Delissa Rivers, Alesha Matthews Yette, Fern Rhedrick, and Mark Silberstein; Assistant U.S. Attorneys Holly Schick, Tom Spiggle, Ed Burley, Chrisellen R. Kolb, Mary McCord, Roy McLeese, Michelle Jackson, and Jeff Ragsdale, and Victim Witness Advocate Marcey Rinker.

Finally, U.S. Attorney Machen commended Assistant U.S. Attorneys Melinda Williams and Cynthia Wright, who prosecuted the case.